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SAYS PEOPLE'S POLICE A GROWING MILITARY FORCE

EDITOR DISCUSSES ORGANIZATION, TRAINING -- Argentinisches Tageblatt, No 19505, 19 May 50

Following Germany's collapse, the first police organs in the Soviet Zone, in fall 1945, were simply civilians wearing armbands who assisted the Occupying Power in maintaining order. In 1946, the first regular police were organized and outfitted with old Air Defense uniforms. The name "People's Police" was first applied in 1947, as Communist infiltration into the organization was becoming effective. Today the People's Police is an organ of the "National Front," under the direct control of the State Security apparatus in the Zone, and includes both regular and border police units and garrisoned units. Its orientation is clearly indicated in the statement in the Disciplinary Order for the German People's Police (August 1949): "Discipline is based on recognition of the fact that it is necessary to fight actively for a united, democratic Germany and against foreign and German imperialists, their agents, and other traitors to the German people."

It is quite clear that all plans for the organization of the People's Police were made by the Soviet Ministry for State Security. In November 1949 representative Trukhanov of the Soviet Ministry for State Security took part in a conference in Berlin-Wilhelmsruh at which the topic under discussion was a Soviet order concerning the establishment of a "Democratic People's Army." While several former German generals recently returned from Soviet captivity and training (Wulz, Brandt, von Lenski, Lattmann, Ulex, and von Weech) waited in the anteroom, decisions from Moscow determined the number and effective strength of the units to be established namely, six Police-Group Commands (Potsdam, Schwerin, Rostock, Dresden, Halle, and Weimar), each in its final stage to number 40,000 men, with an additional 10,000 "in case of emergency." (Each command corresponds to a division, but the use of the term "division" was to be avoided.)

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The composition of a command was to be: one armored regiment, two infantry regiments, one artillery regiment, one mortar battalion, one engineer battalion, and one armored reconnaissance battalion. The Police Academy in Kochstedt near Dessau was to be responsible for providing officers from battalion commander up. Soviet troops would vacate the Koenigsbrueck troop maneuver area to make it available for the new units. Former officers of the German Armed Forces would be reinstated in their former ranks.

The secrecy surrounding barracks and training areas for the garrisoned units has often caused their strength to be exaggerated, or on other occasions underestimated. It is, however, worth noting that every man over 18 who is fit for military service is carried on a recruiting list. The military character of the training is reflected, among other things, in the list of punishments contained in the Disciplinary Order, which includes confinement to quarters up to 14 days, ordinary confinement up to 20 days, strict confinement up to 10 days, and, at the front, demotion in rank.

It will require a certain amount of time before the plans for the People's Police can be fulfilled. Reports from Thuringen estimate the present strength in that Land at 10,000 men, in ten police units and eight border police units, and the total strength in the Zone at 70,000 men. A deserter from a police infantry unit in Thuringen reports that his unit received training in all infantry weapons and that they used the old German Armed Forces training manuals with the swastika crossed off. For weeks a rumor has been circulating that a 2-year "patriotic compulsory military service" will be established in the Soviet Zone.

The reliability of the People's Police as an instrument of Soviet policy is questionable. In spite of all propaganda, it is not popular with the people, and the numerous desertions of People's Police members into Western Germany indicate the low status of morale within its ranks.

Deputy Minister president Walter Ulbricht has commented concerning the People's Police: "The Zone needs a strong power apparatus capable of securing what we have achieved, without the aid of the Occupying Power, if possible." The Communist Minister of the Interior of Land Brandenburg has made the statement: "The bourgeois parties must be liquidated in 1950. At the same time, the state police will be tripled and so well trained that the SED will be able with its help to take over the government."

PEOPLE'S POLICE ALERT UNITS INCREASED -- Argentinisches Tageblatt, No 19504, 18 May 50

The Commissariat for the People's Police Administration has reported that the People's Police, which until now has had 36 alert units (Bereit-schaften), now has 47, with 900-1,000 men in each unit. Garrisoned People's Police do not perform regular police duties but receive actual military training. A special People's Police troop of 1,800 men stationed around Berlin is designated as the "Belt around Berlin."

MILLIONS FOR THE PEOPLE'S POLICE -- Argentinisches Tageblatt, No 19516, 30 May 50

The government of Soviet Zone Germany is spending about 263,600,000 Deutsche marks (East) per year, or about 22 million per month, for salaries for garrisoned units of the People's Police. This sum covers solely the salaries of members of the alert units, their officers, officer candidates, and commanders of People's Police schools. It does not cover expenditures for political and theoretical training of the alert units, sums paid out to regular police in the Laender, or

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salaries paid to the Soviet instructors who supervise the training. At present, there are 44 alert units averaging 1,000 men each, and 18 police schools in Soviet Zone Germany. The monthly salary of a People's Police recruit is 330 Deutsche marks. A barracks commander receives up to 850-900 Deutsche marks.

[A similar story, reportedly obtained from a well-informed deserter, also appeared in Svenska Dagbladet, No 133, 20 May 1950.]

HIGH RANKS FOR WOMEN IN PEOPLE'S POLICE -- Taegliche Rundschau, No 125, 1 Jun 50

The following three women, who occupy key positions in the East German People's Police, have been awarded the badge of honor for exemplary services to the people:

Franziska Rubens, VP [Volkspolizei, People's Police] Inspector, holds the highest rank of any woman in the People's Police, the next higher grade being that of Inspector-in-Chief. Frau Rubens, a former school teacher, is responsible for the ideological orientation of the police force throughout the German Democratic Republic.

Luise Zenk, VP Commander, has been on the staff of the People's Police since 1947. A former stenographer, she was advanced from the position of administrative employee to her current executive assignment. As head of training and cultural development, she is responsible for the procurement of musical instruments, motion-picture equipment, and games of all kinds, and for setting up social and reading rooms. She organizes lectures and discussions and arranges for motion-picture showings and other cultural activities at the remote outposts of the People's Police.

Editha Hermann, VP Commander, a personnel executive in the Main Administration, is in charge of employment of female personnel. A seamstress by trade, she began her career with the People's Police as a stenographer.

PEOPLE'S POLICE TO CONTROL INTERZONAL TRAFFIC -- Argentinisches Tageblatt, No 19531, 14 Jun 50

Soviet Military Authorities in Soviet Zone Germany have turned over control of interzonal traffic at all border points along the East-West demarcation line to the German People's Police.

The People's Police has issued a statement saying that the organization has been ordered to combat smuggling and illegal foreign currency trading.

BERLIN PEOPLE'S POLICE INSTITUTES ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS -- Taegliche Rundschau, No 115, 20 May 50

With few exceptions, the administrative functions heretofore carried out by the president of the Berlin People's Police will become the responsibility of the Democratic Magistrate.

At the same time, the Berlin Fire Department will be incorporated in the Berlin People's Police.

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